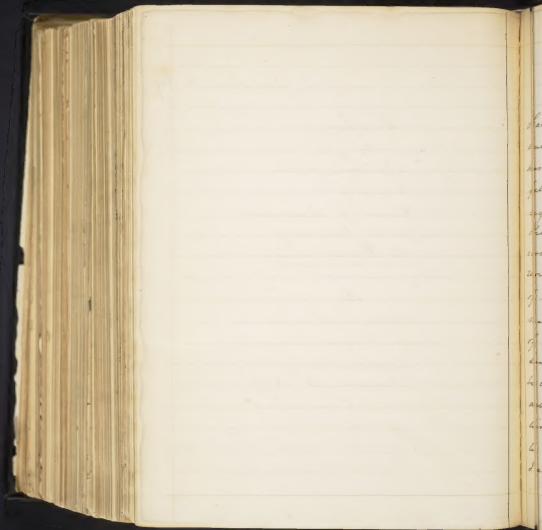


Papd March 10 1829

An Essay  
on  
Acutezies, for the  
Degree of  
Doctor of Medicine  
in the University  
of Pennsylvania.

By  
William Smith.  
of Virginia.

January 13<sup>th</sup> 1829.

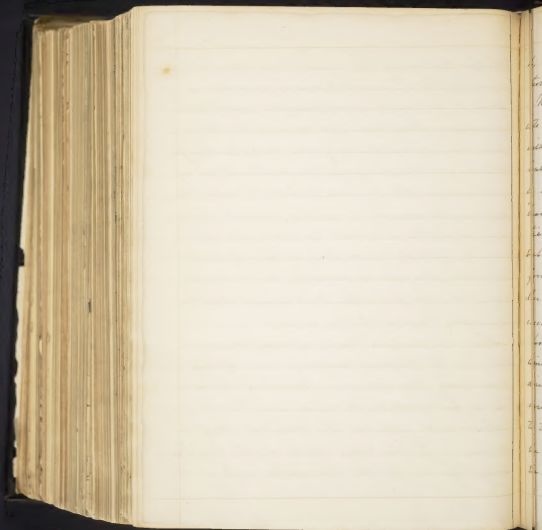


Had I the gratifying prospect of being able  
to make known to those into whose  
hands this paper may hereafter chance to  
fall, any degree of importance, either as  
regards the nature or treatment of this  
disease, but having discerned this writing  
would have been commenced under  
those pleasing sensations, which the idea  
of being about to confer a benefit on  
mankind, naturally produces in the mind  
of every sensitive being. But unfortunately  
such is not the case, and I shall therefore  
be compelled to pursue my course, with an  
anticipation of till & else, as a compensa-  
tion for any trouble which I may encoun-  
ter, than the bare idea of knowing that  
I am acting in conformity with an eternal



blished custom of the ancient and much re-  
spected school of which I am a member -  
There is no another consideration much more  
appalling than that just alluded to. Namely  
that having had scarcely any opportunity of  
obtaining a knowledge of the disease from my  
own personal observations, I shall be under the  
disagreeable necessity of relying almost exclu-  
sively upon the statements of those who have  
already publicly made known their opinions  
respecting it - and consequently can reasonably  
expect to see but little of what is already  
generally known of the disease -

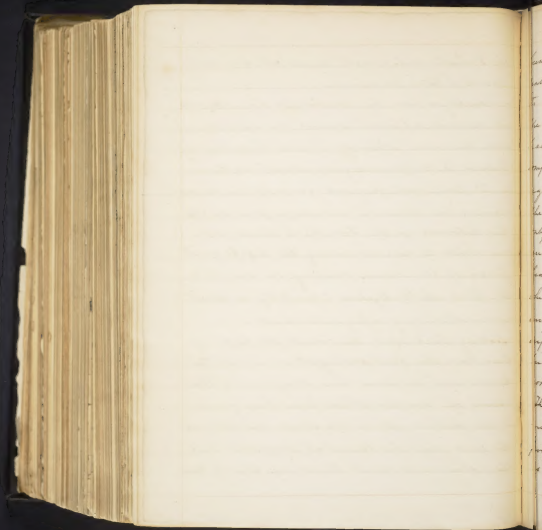
These considerations have almost constrain-  
ed me to forbear saying any thing  
concerning this disease. Should I however  
be so fortunate as to offer any thing  
which may even in the smallest degree  
contribute to the alleviation of the suffer-  
ings of one of the miserable victims of



th, I shall feel amply rewarded for any trouble I may experience.

Neuralgia has, by neurologists, been divided into several different species in accordance with the nerves affected: but it being my intention to confine myself almost exclusively to that most frequent form of the disease bearing the name of neuralgia facialis the tic dolorosus of the French, I shall have but little to say concerning the less frequent forms of the disease, occurring in various other parts of the system, & probably in most cases without any assignable cause.

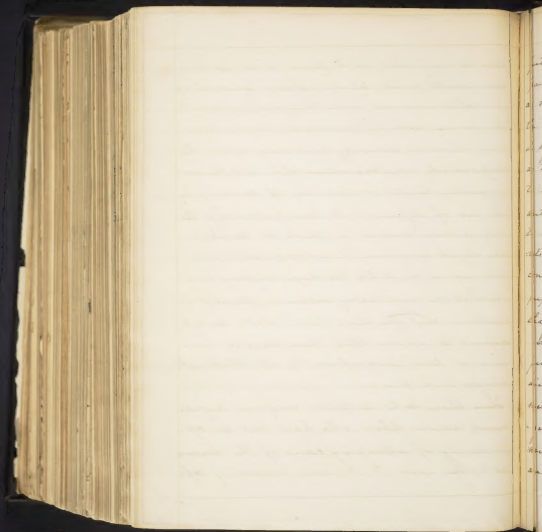
Looking back upon the considerable lapse of time since the first intelligible account of the disease, and <sup>at</sup> the same time considering the variety of memoirs which have been given to the public upon it, we shall probably at the first view be somewhat surprised that the advancement in its knowledge should have





been so very slow as to leave us at the present remote period almost entirely ignorant of its nature, and not much better acquainted with the proper mode of treatment. On the other hand, however, seriously reflecting upon the comparatively rare occurrence of it, and the consequently limited opportunity of describing, by the aid of dissections, its true pathology, the only probable means by which so desirable an object ever can be accomplished, and bearing in mind too the deep mystery in which it on very many occasions seems to be involved; and we shall then probably be left disposed to wonder that there should have been a slow progression to its thorough comprehension -

There seems to be a pretty uniform agreement, among those who have had an opportunity of witnessing cases of the disease as to the nerves commonly primarily affected



would as well as a fair person, concerning  
main thinking, along the stream, not as, but  
as might be expected from the elements, in which  
the house, not unconsciously, manifested there  
is by no means the same general approval  
as to its cause. There is, finally, no one cause  
to which it can be exclusively attributed  
and then, in various, notwithstanding to take  
to any determination of the combination in-  
sults to the different, in various, calculated  
concerning it, for which I am not, <sup>at</sup>  
inward, even did I deem it requisite I  
shall proceed with what I intend saying.

It has long been the opinion of some  
persons distinguished in the science of me-  
dicine, that various conditions of the ali-  
mentary canal, were a new frequent a-  
gent in the production of diseases to the  
nerves. The facts in support of this opinion  
are so numerous, as to, include every, notably,



of doubt as to the fact that Indigestion  
in all but in the most superficial manner di-  
rects the attention to the stomach even when  
very slightly excited must have stirred the  
general nervous circulation existing throughout  
the whole system but especially in those parts  
between which and the stomach the nervous  
communication is more immediate.

many have had abundant reason to be con-  
vinced of the truth of such an opinion  
from the bare circumstance of having ta-  
ken into their stomachs even when in an ex-  
tremely healthy condition food either in an  
improper quantity or of an improper qual-  
ity. The food being taken into the stomach  
and remaining in it too long from the in-  
ability of that organ from either of the cau-  
ses above alluded to, to digest it, there will  
naturally uniformly be experienced much uneas-  
iness about the stomach, arising no doubt from



the irritation of the nerves, produced by the  
food acting as exhalant matter upon  
them. The state of things continuing & the  
unpleasant sensations about the region of  
the stomach becoming more painful, we  
trace in the next place, probably before the  
slightest disturbance can be discovered either  
in the circulation, or in any other part of  
the system, one which the stomach conspi-  
cuously has so much influence in removal  
of painful hydropathetic affections about  
the head & parts most conspicuous in ap-  
pearing thereby unconsciously not only to the  
commencement was made exclusively  
through the intervention of the nerves, but  
also the particulars close nervous con-  
nection existing between the brain & the  
stomach. In the very protracted & severe cases  
of the stomach, the same intimate connec-  
tion between the brain & stomach will be





could it cause the inflammation in liver & cause  
the stomach more probably, when all month  
did not eat & sometimes vomit when in  
a thin part of the system to manifest  
in its diseased state. All it's immediate  
consequence is to excite mainly its in-  
fluence over the system & cause it to be  
stronger than any other part it shows in its  
diseased state.

These several considerations, together with the  
great liability of the head & its connections  
to receive from the diseases of the  
stomach. Every body can observe, that  
the disease in question may frequently  
originate in some unhealthy state of that  
organ. There are other facts too, which  
certainly have a very direct tendency to  
show, it is not the liver, as is often  
in the case. Thus we know that the  
of emetics in the disease, has been often







that the condition of the  
system is such as to demand  
frequently  
to proceed from a relaxed state of  
the stomach -

These facts combined certainly do, in such  
stances, some objection must be raised &  
submitted, against the conclusion as to the  
dinner on some special occasions / present  
ing, as I have been stated, from some un-  
healthy state of the stomach -

All other considerations however being, I  
think the bare circumstance of similar  
ing, produced such advantages of food  
as may have been shown to be a better  
one than to permit the dinner I have  
adopted. as I can not conceive how they  
act thus beneficially, as the case of the  
dinner, if it be not through the medium  
of the stomach, - that is by removing the  
dinner condition from that organ upon



which I maintain the disease in the great  
or number of cases depends, and which  
in all probability, must be necessarily soon  
fall its cause being removed -

I have already indirectly acknowledged  
that there are some objections to the opi-  
nion I entertain of the disease in considera-  
tion depending upon an unsuitable at-  
tack. I am aware that it may in the  
first place be very reasonably argued,  
that did the disease arise from a vitia-  
ted condition of the stomach, it frequent-  
ly as I have supposed it to do, would there  
not be observed, both of its own natural  
functions, as well as of those of other  
parts of the system over which it ex-  
erts such direct influence greater dis-  
turbance than can be found to exist in-  
dependently any case, at least in the com-  
monment of the attack and secondly.





would not be wonderful, due to the its  
swath as a meadow through which a  
cave might possibly be entered & have been  
attended under such conditions since it  
has not yet been discovered to be the same

[illegible]



it the stomach & mind as well as the other  
causes, yet do I admit that such is the  
case, and consequently it cannot but be  
said that such a change becomes quite  
to do good. I cannot but be well satisfied  
in mind that such a change in the  
mind is a great deal better than the  
change of the body in the same  
direction. I have seen some who have been  
forced to believe that the entire body  
has, and it is not a very common  
in addition to the fact that it is well known  
that is frequently the case that as the  
mind is changed in the mind the  
body changed in the mind the body  
is all over a life & the mind is  
now mostly dead. And the body  
and consequently the mind is  
sometimes finding to do good in the  
mind and consequently the mind is well







The use of mechanical restraints should however  
be used sparingly to procure the intended effect  
or being from any cause otherwise witnessed  
the sort of moral treatment is in not so  
being suitable of other measures.

A number of other measures has been used  
in the Asylum, and that some of them have  
been beneficial it appears quite certain.

Truly the use of the moral system, since  
the introduction, seems a different kind  
to have been used in the case of the dis-  
ciple, and there are not wanting many  
authorities in support of their claim to  
attention.

That they may have been beneficial in  
procuring temporary ease I think it  
not all doubtful but judging from the  
frequency of their employment & the re-  
sults of their employment in the  
very few cases in which they have been  
always to have ~~produced~~ <sup>been</sup> ~~used~~ <sup>used</sup> I do not





they have very little power in completely  
eradicationg the disease. Entailing but  
an opinion in regard to the use of Haem-  
lin Medicines in the disease, Namely that  
they are well suited still further than  
any to eradicate the disease & more are  
very abundant in a paroxysm of the dis-  
ease, & in looking that opinion, that most  
valuable of Medicines will for best improve  
in this as in most other affections be found  
in a great measure to supersede the use  
of every other remedy. I shall say no  
thing more concerning the use of these me-  
dicines except barely to add that the  
extract of Theriacum having been found  
useful by Dr Sydenham in allusions which I  
think not very dissimilar <sup>to</sup> this, might  
perhaps be equal, beneficial here -  
The only other remedies of which I am  
conscious as having been used, that have



worthy of our notice are local constants  
affecting both general & internal home  
of the mutual propensities & the direction  
of the affected nerve. We are told by Dr. Ferri  
er that in the case of a young woman  
which came under his direction, bearing  
many of the symptoms of Neuralgia, the  
most decided benefit was obtained by the  
application of a blister, &c, together with the  
use of purgative medicines. He goes on  
further to state that this is not an un-  
common occurrence in the early, & not of  
female life, & that he refers it to de-  
pend almost exclusively upon an in-  
equality of the stomach or bowels.  
Of the correctness of such an opinion  
I entertain no doubt, and equally satisfied  
am I that the benefit, which resulted, from  
the use of the remedies above mentioned  
is mainly to be attributed to the purgatives



Flowing general & local was seen, grounded  
under the idea that the disease depends  
on an increased circulation in the vessels  
of the brain. Should such a state of things  
be ascertained to exist the idea of treatment  
just mentioned would certainly be very ap-  
propriate. This however I suspect is rarely the  
case, and bleeding profusely, ought not to be  
ranked among the remedies of the disease.  
Some as I before mentioned, have also  
seen and here there is opinion by no  
means a general concurrence of opi-  
nion as respects them are. Some of the  
most distinguished physicians considering  
them as having scarcely any claim what  
ever to attention, while others, whose opin-  
ions are certainly entitled to respect, speak  
of their decided utility in the most un-  
reserved manner. So various such con-  
trariety of opinion may appear some.



what difference, though my own experience  
inclines me to the adoption of the latter a  
pinner. Certain I am that some <sup>one</sup> of these me-  
asures has necessarily produced much ad-  
vantage, but to what particular cases of the  
disease it is best adapted I am unable to  
say. Perhaps to those cases in which great  
delicate secret, whether original or brought  
on by the more active means of cure.

In reference to the case I have just men-  
tioned, the Doctor & I were, ~~unanimously~~ in our  
opinion, that in which I have seen done  
it well, for even the most delicate ac-  
cording. This was the case of an aged lady  
of very extraordinary talents & delicate & ten-  
ding to agitate me of disease, that the  
the affected heart was directed to me the  
case, & it took several times a day.

This necessary proceeding insufficient to ar-  
rest the disease, the dose was gradually





increased to double the quantity & in all  
the symptoms diminished. In this state  
the patient remained four days in peace  
until, after a considerable lapse of time,  
being some time since much excited,  
the disease returned with all its former  
violence. The ven was again immediately  
repeated in similar doses & with the same  
good effect.

Several other cases have also lately been  
reported to me, in which this medicine has  
acted with the same good effect of the  
circumstances attending these cases here  
even I know nothing, and have only re-  
laid them with a view of attracting  
attention to the use of the remedy.

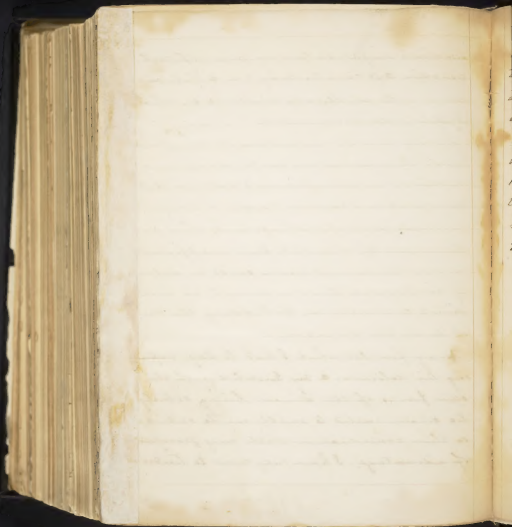
It will readily be imagined from what  
I have previously said, that I should by  
no means be disposed to rely upon it as  
an exclusive remedy, though it may



sometimes useful in aiding more efficient remedies. And cases too may now & then occur, as in the one already mentioned, in which it alone will prove useful.

The only remedy in the cure of the disease which it remains for me to mention, is the division of the diseased nerve - And this operation I conceive might, in every case with propriety be performed, where the means of cure had been ineffectual, provided the diseased nerve could be distinctly ascertained, & there were present no accidental circumstances forbidding the use of such an operation -

Having furnished what I had to say respecting the dolence, & my knowledge of the other forms of the disease being entirely too circumscribed to enable me to enter upon their consideration with any prospect of advantage, I have only now to tender



my thanks to the professors for the oppor-  
tunities, which they have kindly affor-  
ded me of profiting by their lectures, & to  
express a hope that the time may ere  
long arrive when some one of the mem-  
bers of their school shall distinguish  
himself by discovering the now obscure pa-  
thology of this disease, & adopting a  
more rational mode of treatment.

Thine

